EPIC COMICS

SIX FROM SIRIUS II 3
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SIX FROM SIRIUS 2™

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P.G.©'85

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EPIC COMICS

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Searching for gateways to other dimensions, a Sirian archeological operation on Planet-X is treacherously attacked by the mercenary Valis and his crew, the Ghost-Makers.

By the time five of the **Six from Sirius**—Jakosa Lone, Starn, Grod, LaMasque, and Skreed; declared fugitives by Sirius Hub—are released from a prison in the alien ruins by Demandros, head of the Planet-X expedition, it is too late. Demandros is wounded and the five fugitives are forced to flee into the ruins. They alone realize that an excavated alien idol may be one of the precious, sought-after gateways. Cornered, Jakosa extracts the false tooth in which he has stored the psyche of his team's sixth member—Zematin-Lar—and inserts it into the eye of the idol.

Zematin-Lar—now a "solid ghost"—awakens in dark confusion and follows a mysteriously beckoning light, only to emerge from a twin of the idol into a bizarre rock "hive" swirling with two alien factions, the Zavisha and the Quatrals—both waging an Eternal War for possession of the idol/gateway which they believe to be the "godhead," and a means of passage from hell to heaven.

Fleeing the warriors, Zematin takes refuge in a network of tunnels, where she is befriended by an ancient Quatral—the only hive-dweller with any memory of the idol/gateways true origins.

On Planet-X, after being tortured by Valis and his crew, Demandros is rescued by Jakosa, LaMasque, and Grod. Valis' lover, Chelandria, has an opportunity to kill Jakosa, but (apparently having second thoughts about her role as a Ghost-Maker) lets him live.

Jakosa and companions make their way back to the idol, intending to "pick up Zematin."

While, in the hive-cyst on the other side of the idol/gateway, the Quatrals have decided that Zematin is a "goddess," and in her name they mount a new battle in the Eternal War to claim the godhead-idol.

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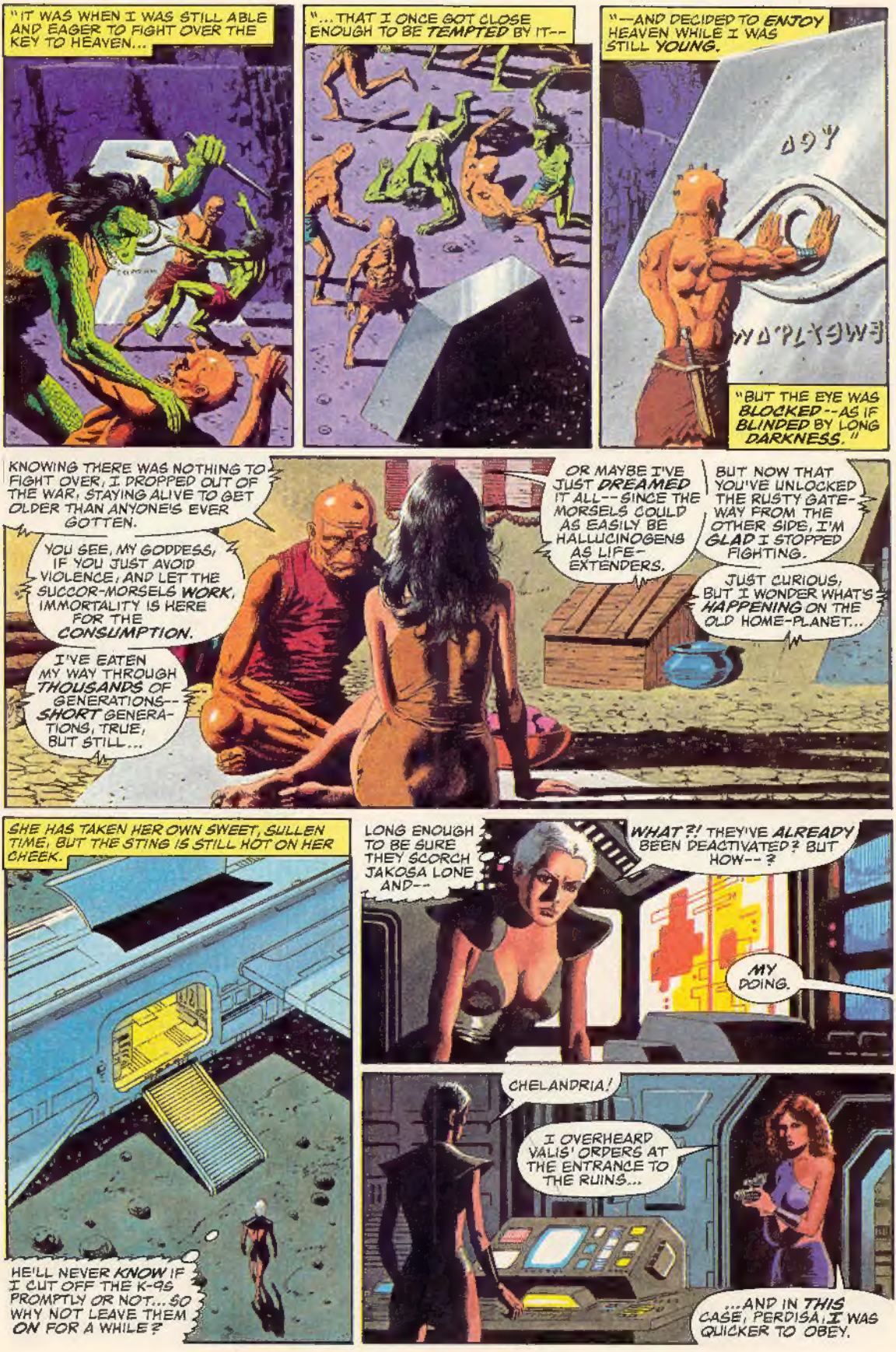
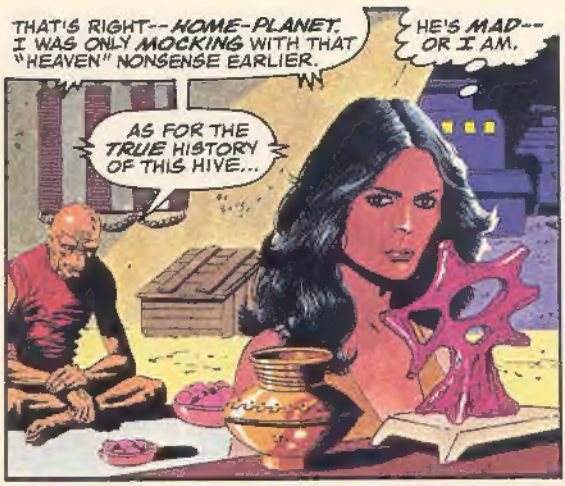
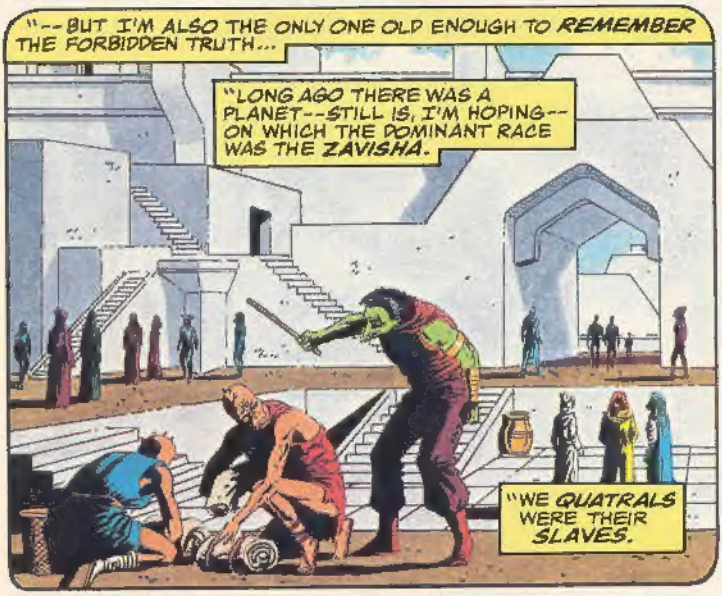
EYETEETH PART III
THE VOID CYST
WE FIGHT UNTIL EVERY ZAVISHA HAS FALLEN!
FOR THE GODHEAD-- AND THE PATHWAY TO HEAVEN!

TAKE STRENGTH, FELLOW QUATRALS! WE FIGHT FOR THE IDOL! WE FIGHT FOR RELEASE FROM FIGHTING! WE FIGHT FOR THE GODDESS!
FOR THE GODDESS!
THE GODDESS!
DID I NOT SAY THEY'D DO ANYTHING FOR YOU?
BUT--
AND NOW THAT ALL THE FINE YOUNG MEN HAVE GONE OFF TO KILL AND DIE, AS USUAL, SIT AND EAT-- IF GHOSTS DO EAT...
...AND I'LL TELL YOU THE TRUTH.
BY THE WAY, ARE YOU AN AGENT OF TECHNOLOGY OR THE SUPER-NATURAL? NOT THAT I CARE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER-- JUST CURIOUS.
WELL, TECHNOLOGY, I GUESS... I HOPE.
MY REAL BODY WAS DESTROYED WHEN I WAS TRANSFERRED TO A FAX-WOMAN SHELL, AND NOW I THINK MY PSYCHE HAS UNDERGONE ANOTHER TRANSFER-- WITHOUT A VACANT BODY WAITING TO RECEIVE IT.
AH!
THAT'S HOW AND WHY THE GATEWAY OPENED AGAIN -- YOU'RE THE KEY!
KEY? GATEWAY--?
OPERATION: TROJAN HORSE!
THE THING YOU CAME THROUGH -- THE THING THEY'VE GONE OFF TO FIGHT OVER, CALLING IT "THE IDOL" -- EVEN THOUGH IT'S ONLY AN IDOL IN DISGUISE, AND A RUSTY GATEWAY IN TRUTH.
AND IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL, I ONCE TRIED TO DO WHAT YOU JUST DID, BUT IN REVERSE.


"IT WAS WHEN I WAS STILL ABLE AND EAGER TO FIGHT OVER THE KEY TO HEAVEN...
"...THAT I ONCE GOT CLOSE ENOUGH TO BE TEMPTED BY IT--
"--AND DECIDED TO ENJOY HEAVEN WHILE I WAS STILL YOUNG.
"BUT THE EYE WAS BLOCKED--AS IF BLINDED BY LONG DARKNESS."
KNOWING THERE WAS NOTHING TO FIGHT OVER, I DROPPED OUT OF THE WAR, STAYING ALIVE TO GET OLDER THAN ANYONE'S EVER GOTTEN.
YOU SEE, MY GODDESS, IF YOU JUST AVOID VIOLENCE, AND LET THE SUCCOR-MORSELS WORK, IMMORTALITY IS HERE FOR THE CONSUMPTION.
I'VE EATEN MY WAY THROUGH THOUSANDS OF GENERATIONS--SHORT GENERATIONS, TRUE, BUT STILL...
OR MAYBE I'VE JUST DREAMED IT ALL--SINCE THE MORSELS COULD AS EASILY BE HALLUCINOGENS AS LIFE-EXTENDERS.
BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE UNLOCKED THE RUSTY GATEWAY FROM THE OTHER SIDE, I'M GLAD I STOPPED FIGHTING.
JUST CURIOUS, BUT I WONDER WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE OLD HOME-PLANET...
SHE HAS TAKEN HER OWN SWEET, SULLEN TIME, BUT THE STING IS STILL HOT ON HER CHEEK.
HE'LL NEVER KNOW IF I CUT OFF THE K-9S PROMPTLY OR NOT...SO WHY NOT LEAVE THEM ON FOR A WHILE?
LONG ENOUGH TO BE SURE THEY SCORCH JAKOSA LONE AND--
WHAT?! THEY'VE ALREADY BEEN DEACTIVATED? BUT HOW--?
MY DOING.
CHELANDRIA!
I OVERHEARD VALIS' ORDERS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE RUINS...
...AND IN THIS CASE, PERDISA, I WAS QUICKER TO OBEY.


THAT'S RIGHT--HOME-PLANET. I WAS ONLY MOCKING WITH THAT "HEAVEN" NONSENSE EARLIER.
HE'S MAD--OR I AM.
AS FOR THE TRUE HISTORY OF THIS HIVE...

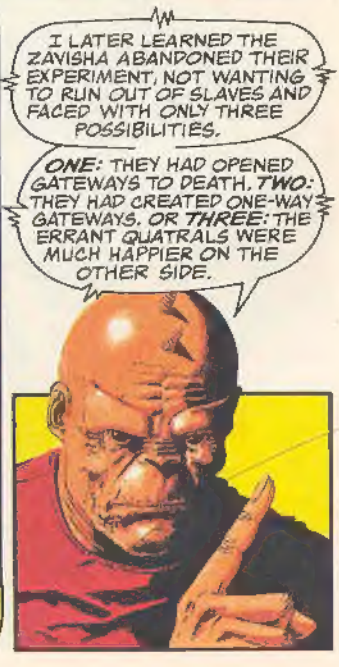
...THOSE RELIGIOUS ZEALOTS WOULD CUT MY KNEES OUT FOR SPEAKING IT, BUT IF I CAN'T TELL THE TRUTH TO A GODDESS--
TELL ME.
YOU'RE LUCKY I FOUND YOU, GODDESS, FOR NOT ONLY DID I STOP YOU IN THE TUNNELS BEFORE YOU REACHED THE RIM OF BLACKNESS WHERE ALL THINGS EXPLODE--


"--BUT I'M ALSO THE ONLY ONE OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER THE FORBIDDEN TRUTH...
"LONG AGO THERE WAS A PLANET--STILL IS, I'M HOPING--ON WHICH THE DOMINANT RACE WAS THE ZAVISHA.
"WE QUATRALS WERE THEIR SLAVES.

"A ZAVISHA SCIENTIST DISCOVERED SOMETHING OF ENORMOUS VALUE--THE TECHNOLOGY FOR BRIDGING PARALLEL DIMENSIONS.

"BUT SINCE THE ZAVISHA WERE NEITHER CERTAIN THE DEVICE WOULD WORK NOR CERTAIN WHERE IT WOULD LEAD, THEY SENT QUATRALS THROUGH IT.
"THESE CHOICELESS PIONEERS DISAPPEARED OBEDIENTLY ENOUGH--

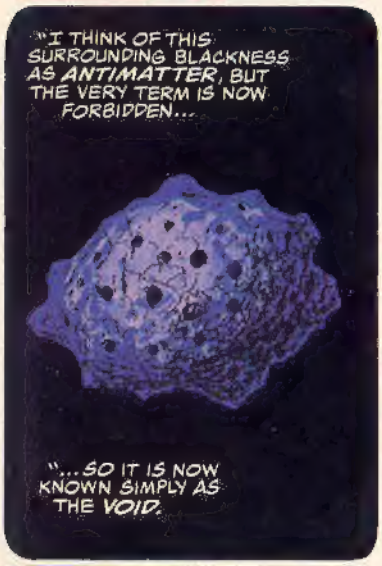
"--BUT NEVER REAPPEARED TO REPORT THEIR EXPERIENCES.
"HOW COULD WE (YES, I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST)--
"--AFTER POPPING OUT OF THIN AIR INTO THIS HIVE-WOMB WITH NO WAY BACK?"


I LATER LEARNED THE ZAVISHA ABANDONED THEIR EXPERIMENT, NOT WANTING TO RUN OUT OF SLAVES AND FACED WITH ONLY THREE POSSIBILITIES.
ONE: THEY HAD OPENED GATEWAYS TO DEATH. TWO: THEY HAD CREATED ONE-WAY GATEWAYS. OR THREE: THE ERRANT QUATRALS WERE MUCH HAPPIER ON THE OTHER SIDE.

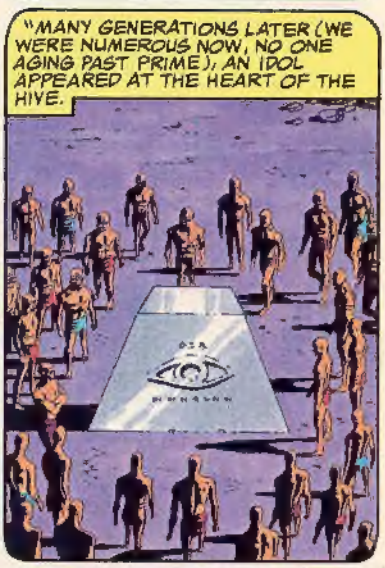
"NO DOUBT THE ZAVISHA HOPED FOR THE THIRD POSSIBILITY, BUT WERE UNWILLING TO RISK THE FIRST TWO.

"MEANWHILE, WE FOUND THE SUCCOR-CYSTS AND BEGAN TO MULTIPLY.

"BUT WE ALSO FOUND, AT THE END OF EACH TUNNEL, THE BLACKNESS BEYOND--
"--WHOSE TOUCH WAS NASTY, EXPLOSIVE DEATH.


"I THINK OF THIS SURROUNDING BLACKNESS AS ANTIMATTER, BUT THE VERY TERM IS NOW FORBIDDEN...
"...SO IT IS NOW KNOWN SIMPLY AS THE VOID.

"ANYWAY, WE RETREATED BACK INTO THE HIVE-WOMB, A FORM OF HEAVEN TO FORMER SLAVES...
"...ALTHOUGH A FINITE HEAVEN CONTAINED IN ONE HELL OF A HELL.

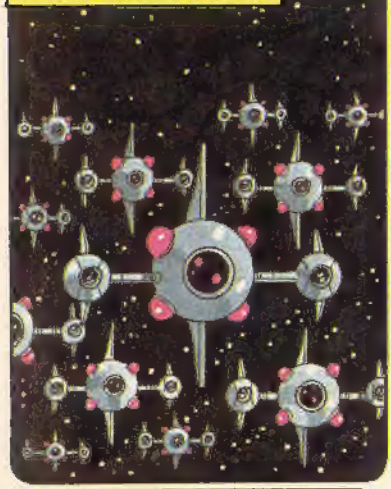

"MANY GENERATIONS LATER (WE WERE NUMEROUS NOW, NO ONE AGING PAST PRIME), AN IDOL APPEARED AT THE HEART OF THE HIVE.

"IT STOOD FOR SEVERAL DAYS, TEMPTING AND FRIGHTENING, BEFORE REVEALING ITSELF AS A GATEWAY IN DISGUISE...

"THE FIRST ZAVISHA REVEALED HIMSELF HERALD AND PATH-FINDER, NEVER DREAMING HOW TIMELY HIS ADVENT WAS.
"YOU SEE, GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF, WE HAD BEGUN TO OVER-POPULATE THE HIVE.

"ANYWAY, AFTER MARVELING AT US-- AND THE MIRACULOUS SUCCOR CYSTS--THE ZAVISHA APPRISED US OF THE GRAVE DANGER APPROACHING OUR FORMER PLANET...

"... AN ARMADA OF ALIEN, HOSTILE SHIPS--AGAINST WHICH THE ZAVISHA HAD NEITHER DEFENSE NOR ESCAPE ...UNTIL SOMEONE REMEMBERED THE ANCIENT *GATEWAYS*.



"DESPERATE IN THE FACE OF CONQUEST, THEY REDUCED RISK BY DISGUISING THE GATEWAYS AND SENDING THROUGH EACH A *MATCHING* GATEWAY--INCREASING THE POSSIBILITY OF RETURN.

"A VOLUNTEER BRAVED EACH GATEWAY; IF POSITIVE NEWS WAS BROUGHT BACK, THE OTHER ZAVISHA WOULD FOLLOW, LEAVING A DESERTED PLANET TO THE APPROACHING CONQUERORS.

"WHERE THE OTHER SCOUTS WENT, I KNOW NOT, BUT SO TRANSFIXED WERE WE BY *THIS* ONE --A FORMER *MASTER*-- THAT WE LET HIM GO BACK WITH HIS 'GOOD NEWS.'

"REALIZATION SOON GREW, HOWEVER; MASTERS WOULD NOW JOIN SLAVES IN HEAVEN, AS THE ZAVISHA INVADED OUR HIVE... TURNING IT INTO *HELL*.

"AND SO, WHEN THE HERALD RETURNED WITH HIS FELLOWS, WE KILLED MANY ON THE SPOT, IN THE VERY FIRST BATTLE OF THE ETERNAL WAR...

"...AND PROVE COUNTLESS OTHERS THROUGH THE TUNNELS INTO THE EXPLOSIVE EMBRACE OF THE BLACKNESS BEYOND."

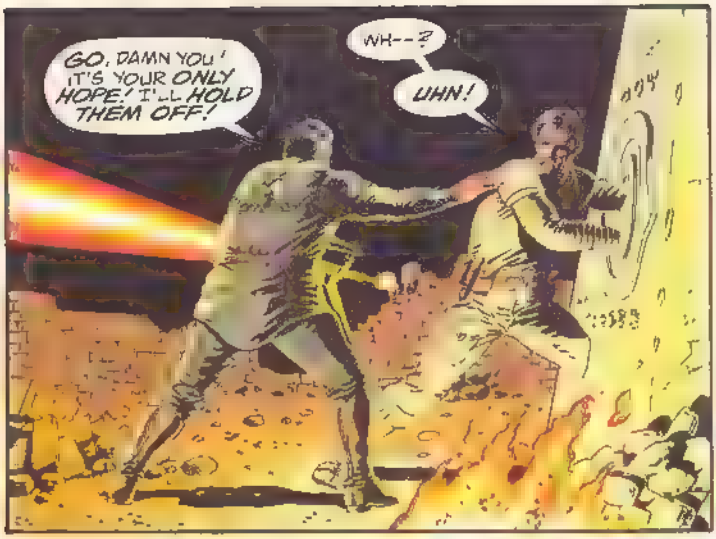
BUT THERE WERE TOO MANY ZAVISHA TO KILL, TOO MANY INVADING US AS THEY FLED THEIR *OWN* INVADERS, AND YET THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH TO *OVERRUN* US.
THUS EVOLVED THE CRUEL STALEMATE CONTINUING TO THIS DAY OF YOUR ARRIVAL, MY GODDESS.
ROUGHLY HALF THE HIVE IS CONTROLLED BY QUATRALS; WHILE THE ZAVISHA HOLD THE OTHER HALF, AND EVERY TIME ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER MAKES A NEW BID TO CLAIM THE GATEWAY IN THE CENTER--
--WE HAVE ANOTHER INCONCLUSIVE SKIRMISH IN THE ETERNAL WAR, SUCH AS THE ONE WHICH SHOULD BE ENSUING RIGHT ABOUT *NOW*...

"AND A GODSEND IT IS--SINCE THE ETERNAL WAR PREVENTS OVERPOPULATION OF THE FINITE HIVE-WOMB.
"THE ONLY WAY FOR QUATRAL AND ZAVISHA TO COEXIST--
"--IS THROUGH MUTUAL MURDER, A PERPETUAL THINNING OF THE TWO HERDS--"
...AS EACH SIDE VIES TO WIN THE WAR AND GAIN THE KEY TO THE DOORWAY OUT.
COME, GODDESS --WATCH NATURE NEATLY WORK ITS WONDER.
IF ALL YOU'VE SAID IS TRUE, WHY DID YOUR LEADER GIVE THAT SPEECH...?
...ABOUT GODHEADS AND PATHWAYS TO HEAVEN.
BECAUSE THE "BLASPHEMOUS KNOWLEDGE" WHICH I ALONE REMEMBER IS NOW FORBIDDEN.
BEINGS REGRESS IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF NOTHING BUT EATING, SEX, AND KILLING.
THE INTELLECT IS REDUCED TO ESSENTIALS --AND THROUGH THE GENERATIONS TRUTH BECOMES GARBLED AS MYTH AND RELIGION REAR THEIR UGLY HEADS.
AT FIRST THE ZAVISHA FOUGHT FOR THE GATEWAY SO THEY COULD RETURN HOME AFTER THE INVADERS HAD PLUNDERED AND DEPARTED...
...AND WE QUATRALS FOUGHT TO DESTROY IT AND CUT OFF THE INVASION OF OUR "HEAVEN" EVEN AS THE FIGHTING TURNED IT INTO HELL...
...WITH BOTH SIDES NEVER SUSPECTING, AS I ALONE DISCOVERED, THAT THE THING NO LONGER EVEN WORKED.
BY NOW, ZAVISHA AND QUATRAL ALIKE HAVE FORGOTTEN EXACTLY WHAT IT IS THEY'RE FIGHTING OVER.
THEY KNOW ONLY THAT THE IDOL MUST BE IMPORTANT...
...AND IT'S ALL...TWISTED.
JOURNEY'S END HAS BECOME THE STARTING POINT, WITH THE IDOL NOW SEEN AS THE PATHWAY FROM THIS "HELL" TO SOME OTHER "HEAVEN."
AND WHO KNOWS, GODDESS?
NOW THAT YOU'VE SHOWN US THE WAY IN REVERSE, UNLOCKING THE GATEWAY...
...PERHAPS BOTH SIDES ARE RIGHT.

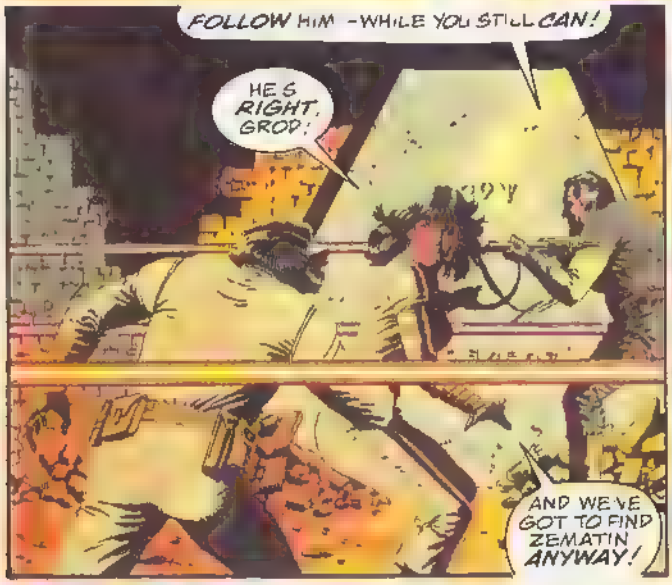
I OWE YOU A LARGE ONE, JAKOSA, FOR KEEPING ME OUT OF HEAVEN.
WHAT I DID ONLY SETTLES A PREVIOUS SCORE, DEMANDROS.
THEN YOU'VE FORGOTTEN WHAT HAPPENED DURING OUR FINAL SURVIVAL TEST AT THE ACAD--
WE CAN SIT HERE AND TRADE DEBTS ALL NIGHT, BUT I'D RATHER GET MOVING IF YOU'RE UP TO IT.
AS MUCH AS I'LL EVER BE--AFTER WHAT XEKROS DID...
NO SIGN OF STARN OR SKREED ANYWHERE, JAKOSA.
ALL RIGHT, GROD.
WE MIGHT AS WELL GO PICK UP ZEMMIE.
AND WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO TELL US WHERE YOU PUT HER?
YOU'LL SEE, LAMASQUE--IN A VERY SAFE PLACE... I HOPE.
"MY THEORY, GODDESS, IS THAT THE ANTIMATTER VOID REQUIRES A DIET OF MATTER TO SUSTAIN ITSELF...
"...MAKING THIS HIVE-WOMB BOTH A FORM OF BAIT AND A BREEDING FARM.
WHEN THE BAIT HAS NURTURED US TO THE POINT OF OVERPOPULATION, THOSE ON THE OUTER EDGES WOULD BE FORCED OUT, BECOMING FOOD FOR THE VOID.
SO YOU TELL ME--ARE WE IN HEAVEN OR HELL?

"IF HELL, WE'VE THWARTED IT BY HOARDING THE KILLING AMONG OURSELVES..."
DON'T TELL ME YOU PUT HER IN THERE--IN THAT EYE?
YOU SAW WHAT HAPPENED TO SKREED'S COMMUNICATOR!
THAT COULD WELL BE ONE OF THE GATEWAYS!
"AND IF HEAVEN--"
WHAT THE--? THE FALSE TOOTH --WITH ZEMMIE'S PSYCHE STORED IN IT--IT'S GONE!
AND MY HAND...!
"--WE HAVE PERVERTED IT--
"--BY THE SAME MEANS."
AND SO, MY GODDESS, WE--
WHAT IS IT?
I SAW SOME THING.
YES, THE BLOOD IS--
NO--SOMETHING COMING OUT OF THE IDOL!
THERE...THERE WAS NOTHING IN THERE... NOTHING.
OR A WHOLE LOT OF THINGS, JAKOSA, IF SIRIUS HUB IS RIGHT.
A WHOLE OTHER DIMENSION ...PERHAPS A WHOLE OTHER UNIVERSE OF--
JAKOSA!!
VZHZHZHT

IT'S BOLTAR!
RUN! GET OUT OF THIS TRENCH!
THOOM
CHOOM
FRAM
TOO LATE JAKOSA!
CHOOM
BRAM
THOOM
WHRAM
VALIS IS BLOCKING THE OTHER END!
THOSE ARE THE SOUNDS OF A FIREFIGHT, ALL RIGHT--UP THIS WAY, SKREED!
AND I SUPPOSE YOUR EARS HAVE ALREADY ASCERTAINED THE NUMBER OF WEAPONS?
SO FAR, TWO PARBEAM PISTOLS ONE RIFLE.
I'LL TAKE THAT RIFLE, JAKOSA.
DEMANDROS! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU--
THERE IS A WAY OUT OF THIS TRENCH--AND YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE IT!


GO, DAMN YOU! IT'S YOUR ONLY HOPE! I'LL HOLD THEM OFF!
WH--?
UHN!

A GATEWAY...!
RIGHT THERE ALL ALONG!


FOLLOW HIM -WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
HE'S RIGHT, GROD!
AND WE'VE GOT TO FIND ZEMATIN ANYWAY!

OUR LUCK, SKREED-- JUST WHEN WE FIND 'EM, WE LOSE EM
BY THE BARDS' BONES! I DON'T--

--DON'T BELIEVE IT!

JAKOSA! WHERE--
FROM ONE HELLFIRE--
--STRAIGHT INTO ANOTHER LAMASQUE!

JAKOSA! THIS WAY! WE'LL COME DOWN TO MEET YOU!

HEE HEE...

IT GETS VERY INTERESTING, MY GODDESS.

LUCKILY THIS BATTLE IS MORE PRIMITIVE; SO JUST DUCK ALL THE ROCKS AND SPEARS--

--AND FOLLOW THAT VOICE! IT SOUNDED LIKE ZEMMIE!

ARGH-H!

SPRAKT

NOT BAD FOR A CRACKLER, XEKROS.

AYE, BOLTAR - - T LEFT HIM ALIVE...AND MINE!

SPZZZZ

I'M ABOUT TO DIE ALL RIGHT, XEKROS...

I'VE NO DOJBT OF THAT--

LET GO, XEKROS --YOU FOOL!

--BUT YOU WON'T BE IN THIS WORLD TO SEE IT!

AND YOU, VALIS -- I'VE SUFFERED AT YOUR HANDS EVER SINCE OUR TRAINING DAYS . BUT NO MORE.

SNAP!

THOOM

I'M BEYOND YOUR REACH NOW.

AND SO YOU ARE, DEMANDROS -- BUT YOU FAILED TO REALIZE THE SAME THING XEKROS DID...

WHERE...?

"OUR BLUFF HAS COME TRUE."

FRAM

IT'S XEKROS! HE CAME THROUGH THE GATEWAY AFTER US -- AND HE'S GOT A PISTOL!

AYE, JAKOSA, BUT NOT FOR LONG.

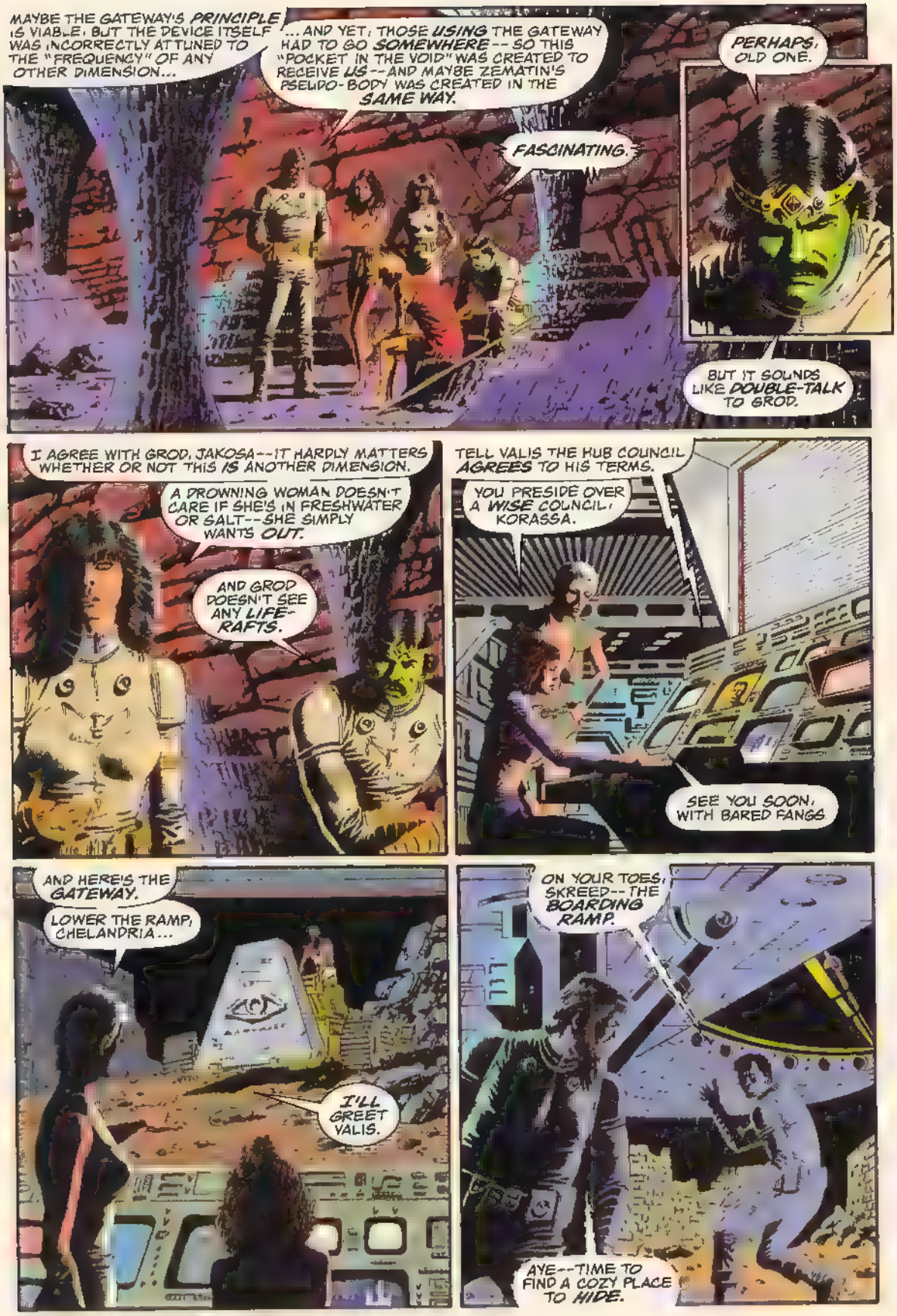
STAND GUARD OVER IT, BOLTAR -- AND BLAST THE FIRST THING THAT TRIES TO EMERGE.

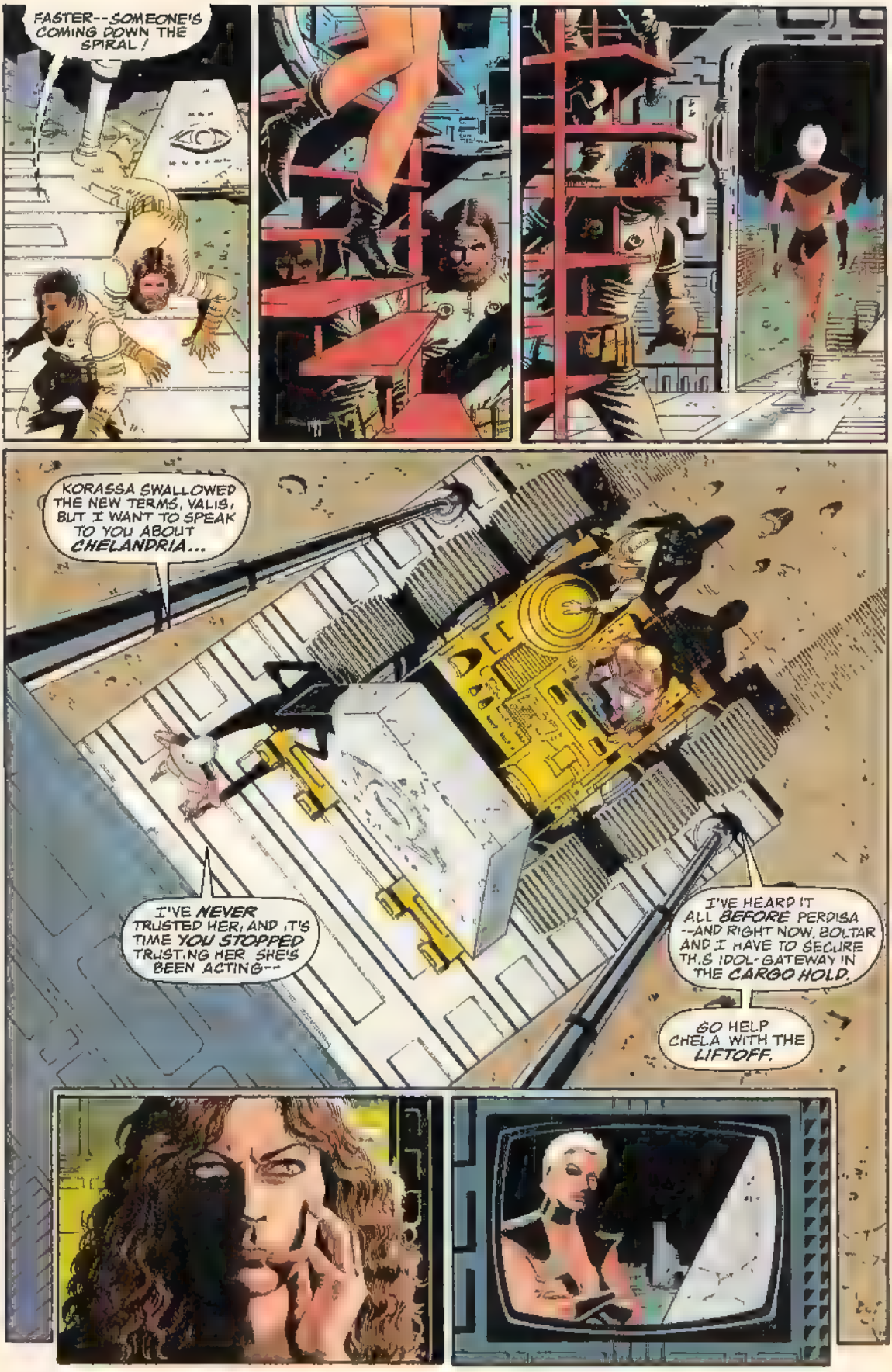
WHAT IF IT'S XEKROS?

HE DESERVES IT.

WE LEAVE FOR HUB AS SOON AS THE THING IS CARTED ABOARD SHIP--AND AS SOON AS KORASSA INCREASES THE PURCHASE PRICE TO INCLUDE THE BOUNTY ON JAKOSA AND HIS FRIENDS
GATEWAY AND FUGITIVES--ALL IN ONE NEAT PACKAGE.
SOMETHING TELLS ME WE NEED A TICKET ON VALIS' SHIP.
YEAH--CAN'T LET JAKOSA AND THE OTHERS LEAVE US BEHIND, NOW CAN WE?
KRAK
GOOD WORK, GROD--WITHOUT HIS WEAPON, HE'S CUT OFF FROM THE GATEWAY.
OF COURSE, WE DON'T HAVE ANY WEAPONS EITHER.
AND EVEN IF WE DID, VALIS IS WAITING FOR US IN THAT TRENCH ON THE GATEWAY'S OTHER SIDE...
WELL, ZEMATIN INASMUCH AS YOU SEEM TO BE A "SOLID GHOST"--A PSYCHE INHABITING A BODY WHICH DOESN'T EXIST--I'D SAY YOU'VE GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO.
YES, GODDESS, THIS I MUST HEAR.
TRENCH?

"SOME CARTH EH SKREED? BUT WE COULD TRY A DIVE THROUGH THE GATEWAY OURSELVES-- JOIN JAKOSA AND THE OTHERS..."
"THEN WHO'D BE LEFT ON THE OUTSIDE TO WATCH OVER US, STARN? AND MORE IMPORTANTLY--"
--WHAT'S IN THERE?
YEAH--GUESS THE STOWAWAY IDEA'S BEST.
--AND THAT'S THE STORY, JAKOSA.
THE GATEWAY MUST EMPLOY THE SAME PRINCIPLE AS THE PSYCHE TRANSFER TO FAX-BODIES, EXPLAINING WHY I WAS PROJECTED FROM THE FALSE TOOTH INTO THIS OTHER DIMENSION...
...AND WITH NO FAX-WOMAN BODY AWAITING ME, WHY I'M NOW A "GHOST," ALTHOUGH I STILL CAN'T EXPLAIN WHERE I GOT THIS BODY...
MAYBE THIS ISN'T ANOTHER DIMENSION. YOU SAID THIS "HIVE" IS FINITE AND COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY ANTIMATTER...
...PERHAPS MAKING IT SOME SORT OF "NO MAN'S LAND"--A PURGATORY MIDGROUND BETWEEN DIMENSIONS.
YOU INTEREST ME ALMOST AS MUCH AS THE GODDESS ZEMATIN, SIR MIGHT YOU EXPOUND ON YOUR THEORY?
WHAT I'M SUGGESTING IS THAT MAYBE THE GATEWAY FUNCTIONS ONLY PARTIALLY OR IMPROPERLY.
MAYBE THIS HIVE WAS LITERALLY CREATED BY THE VERY ACT OF USING THE GATEWAY--THE ENERGY OF TRANSIT CONVERTED TO MATTER, AND SHAPED ACCORDING TO SUBCONSCIOUS EXPECTATIONS.


MAYBE THE GATEWAY'S PRINCIPLE IS VIABLE, BUT THE DEVICE ITSELF WAS INCORRECTLY ATTUNED TO THE "FREQUENCY" OF ANY OTHER DIMENSION...
...AND YET, THOSE USING THE GATEWAY HAD TO GO SOMEWHERE--SO THIS "POCKET IN THE VOID" WAS CREATED TO RECEIVE US--AND MAYBE ZEMATIN'S PSEUDO-BODY WAS CREATED IN THE SAME WAY.
FASCINATING.
PERHAPS, OLD ONE.
BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE DOUBLE-TALK TO GROD.
I AGREE WITH GROD, JAKOSA--IT HARDLY MATTERS WHETHER OR NOT THIS IS ANOTHER DIMENSION.
A DROWNING WOMAN DOESN'T CARE IF SHE'S IN FRESHWATER OR SALT--SHE SIMPLY WANTS OUT.
AND GROD DOESN'T SEE ANY LIFE-RAFTS.
TELL VALIS THE HUB COUNCIL AGREES TO HIS TERMS.
YOU PRESIDE OVER A WISE COUNCIL, KORASSA.
SEE YOU SOON, WITH BARED FANGS.
AND HERE'S THE GATEWAY.
LOWER THE RAMP, CHELANDRIA...
I'LL GREET VALIS.
ON YOUR TOES, SKREED--THE BOARDING RAMP.
AYE--TIME TO FIND A COZY PLACE TO HIDE.

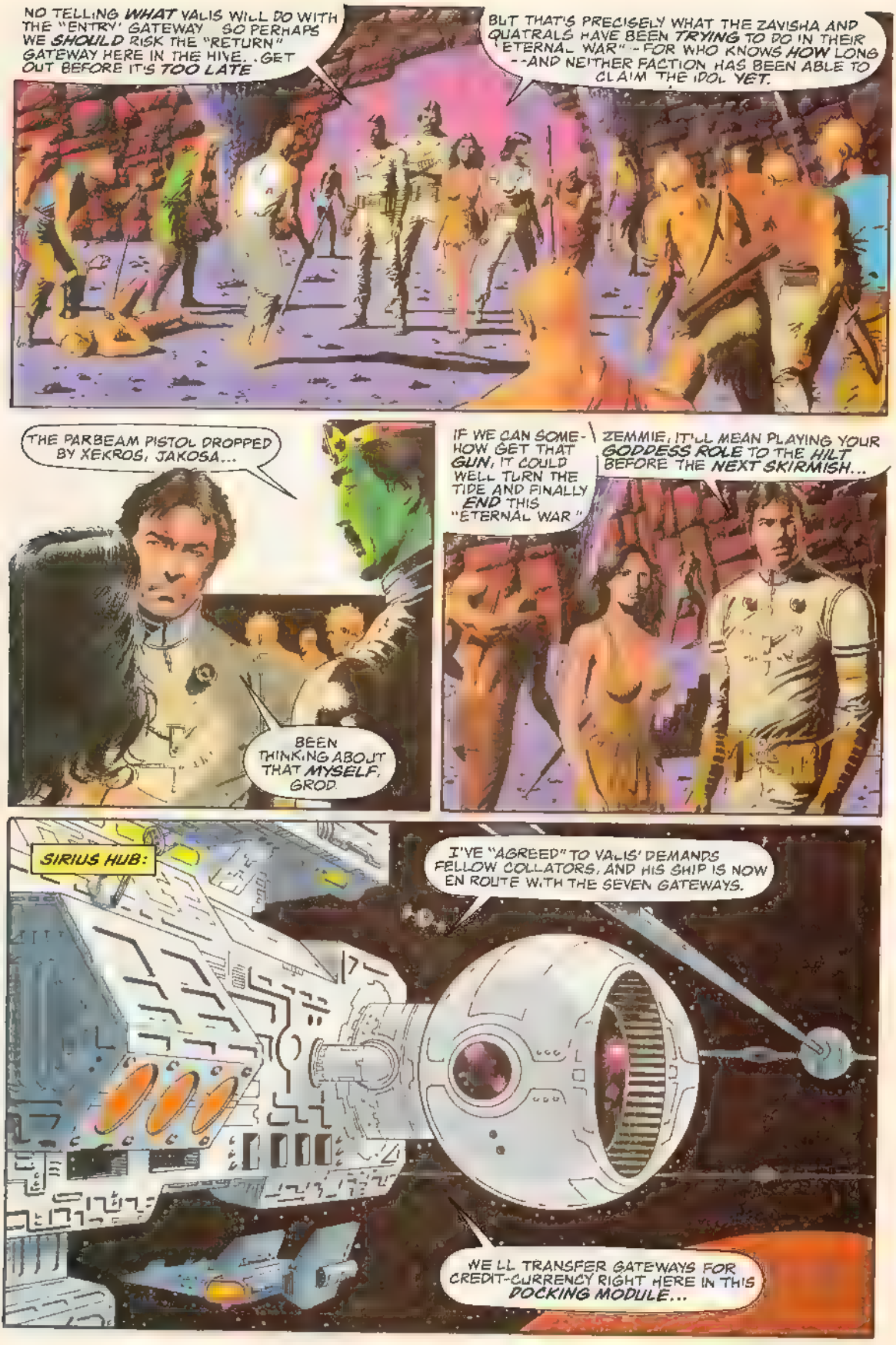

FASTER--SOMEONE'S COMING DOWN THE SPIRAL!
KORASSA SWALLOWED THE NEW TERMS, VALIS, BUT I WANT TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT CHELANDRIA...
I'VE NEVER TRUSTED HER, AND IT'S TIME YOU STOPPED TRUSTING HER SHE'S BEEN ACTING--
I'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE PERDISA --AND RIGHT NOW, BOLTAR AND I HAVE TO SECURE THIS IDOL-GATEWAY IN THE CARGO HOLD.
GO HELP CHELA WITH THE LIFTOFF.

A "COZY PLACE", SKREED?
WHERE ELSE SHOULD STOWAWAYS HIDE--
"--IF NOT IN THE CARGO HOLD?"
WE'LL KEEP THE GATEWAY UNDER ROTATING GUARD, BOLTAR, BUT JUST TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T HAVE AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR NAMED JAKOSA LONE--
UNFF! OUT OF MY FACE, SKREED!
--SHOVE THE EYE AGAINST THE WALL.
CAN I HELP IT--
--IF VALIS' PILOTS TREAT GEE-FORCES SO LIGHTLY?
NO, BUT IF YOU DON'T START EXHALING OUT YOUR EARS, I'M GONNA--
SHH!
MAY NOT BE THE BEST MEAL WE'VE EVER HAD, BUT IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, ZEMMIE
... EVEN WORTH THE SACRIFICED TOOTH WHICH MIGHT MAKE THE MEAL EASIER.
NOW THAT ZEMATIN IS NO LONGER TRAPPED IN THAT PHAEDRA FAX-WOMAN BODY, GROD THINKS JAKOSA WARMS TO HER SPIRIT.

AMAZING HOW QUICKLY YOU MEN FORGET...
MM AH, BATTLE'S OVER, IT SEEMS.
...AND HOW QUICK YOU ARE TO BLEED.
WHILE, A WORLD OR MORE AWAY, IN THE CARGO HOLD ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE IDOL...
A SOUND.
BACK HERE...?
HAVE YOU SEEN CHELANDRIA?
NO--AND MY EYES NEED NEVER SEE HER AGAIN!
I TELL YOU SHE'S--
AND I TOLD YOU, PERDISA ..
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT--AND THAT'S AN ORDER.
I HAVE THINGS TO DO.
CLLLLL
CHELA -I'VE BEEN SEARCHING THE ENTIRE SHIP FOR YOU...

WHY HAVE YOU BEEN AVOIDING ME?
IT'S SIMPLY MY GUARD ROTATION, VALIS.
CLOSE.
TOO.
YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, CHELA -- WOMEN ARE MY ONE WEAKNESS, AND YOU -- YOU'RE MY GODDESS -- EVEN THOUGH PERDISA STREL THINKS YOU'LL BE MY DOWNFALL.
HER INTUITIONS HAVE BEEN ACCURATE IN THE PAST.
ARE YOU SAYING YOU WILL BRING ME DOWN?
WHAT DO YOU THINK VALIS?
I THINK THE WALLS BLINDFOLD IS GUARD ENOUGH...
...AND YOU SHOULD THEREFORE SPEND THE REST OF YOUR ROTATION IN MY QUARTERS.
SO? DID SHE KNOW WE WERE HERE?
YOUR COMMUNICATOR, STARN.
I DON'T KNOW, IF SHE KNEW --
-BUT I DO KNOW THE TROJAN HORSE WAS NEVER THIS TIGHT ..AND WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE JAKOSA AND THE OTHERS?
NOT THAT I EXPECT TO FIND THE ANSWER IN YOUR COMMUNICATOR, STARN...
"...BUT MINE DID GO THROUGH THAT IDOL SO...
THEY'RE PROBABLY WATCHING FROM THE TUNNELS BUT IF I CAN REACH MY PISTOL... FIGHT MY WAY TO THE IDOL...

"JAKOSA, THIS IS SKREED--DO YOU READ ME?
"CAN YOU HEAR ME, JAKOSA--?
YES...THE PISTOL FELL UNDER THIS BODY..
"COME IN, JAKOSA!
"OH, WELL....DIDN'T THINK SO, STARN.. BUT WE HAD TO TRY."


NO TELLING WHAT VALIS WILL DO WITH THE "ENTRY" GATEWAY SO PERHAPS WE SHOULD RISK THE "RETURN" GATEWAY HERE IN THE HIVE. . GET OUT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE
BUT THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT THE ZAVISHA AND QUATRALS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO DO IN THEIR "ETERNAL WAR" -- FOR WHO KNOWS HOW LONG --AND NEITHER FACTION HAS BEEN ABLE TO CLAIM THE IDOL YET.
THE PARBEAM PISTOL DROPPED BY XEKROS, JAKOSA...
BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT MYSELF, GROD.
IF WE CAN SOMEHOW GET THAT GUN, IT COULD WELL TURN THE TIDE AND FINALLY END THIS "ETERNAL WAR"
ZEMMIE, IT'LL MEAN PLAYING YOUR GODDESS ROLE TO THE HILT BEFORE THE NEXT SKIRMISH...
SIRIUS HUB:
I'VE "AGREED" TO VALIS' DEMANDS FELLOW COLLATORS, AND HIS SHIP IS NOW EN ROUTE WITH THE SEVEN GATEWAYS.
WE'LL TRANSFER GATEWAYS FOR CREDIT-CURRENCY RIGHT HERE IN THIS DOCKING MODULE...

...BUT ONCE THE GATEWAYS ARE *OURS*, OF COURSE, WE WILL NOT PERMIT THEM TO LEAVE *WITH* THE CREDITS... NOR EVEN WITH THEIR TREACHEROUS *LIVES*, FOR THAT MATTER

UPON ACTIVATION BY *MY VOICE-PRINT*--

--EVERY ONE OF THE SURROUNDING HATCHWAYS WILL *OPEN* -- TO ADMIT THE CADRE OF *TROOPERS* STATIONED IN EACH CORRIDOR.

EXCELLENT, KORASSA.

SUPERB, CHELANDRIA

BUT FOR *HER*, THIS TIME, THERE IS *LITTLE* ENJOYMENT...

THE ONLY FEELING TO RIVAL IT IS *WINNING*-- *DOMINATING*...

..THE WAY I'VE DOMINATED *JAKOSA LONE* EVER SINCE WE WERE *FELLOW TRAINEES*...

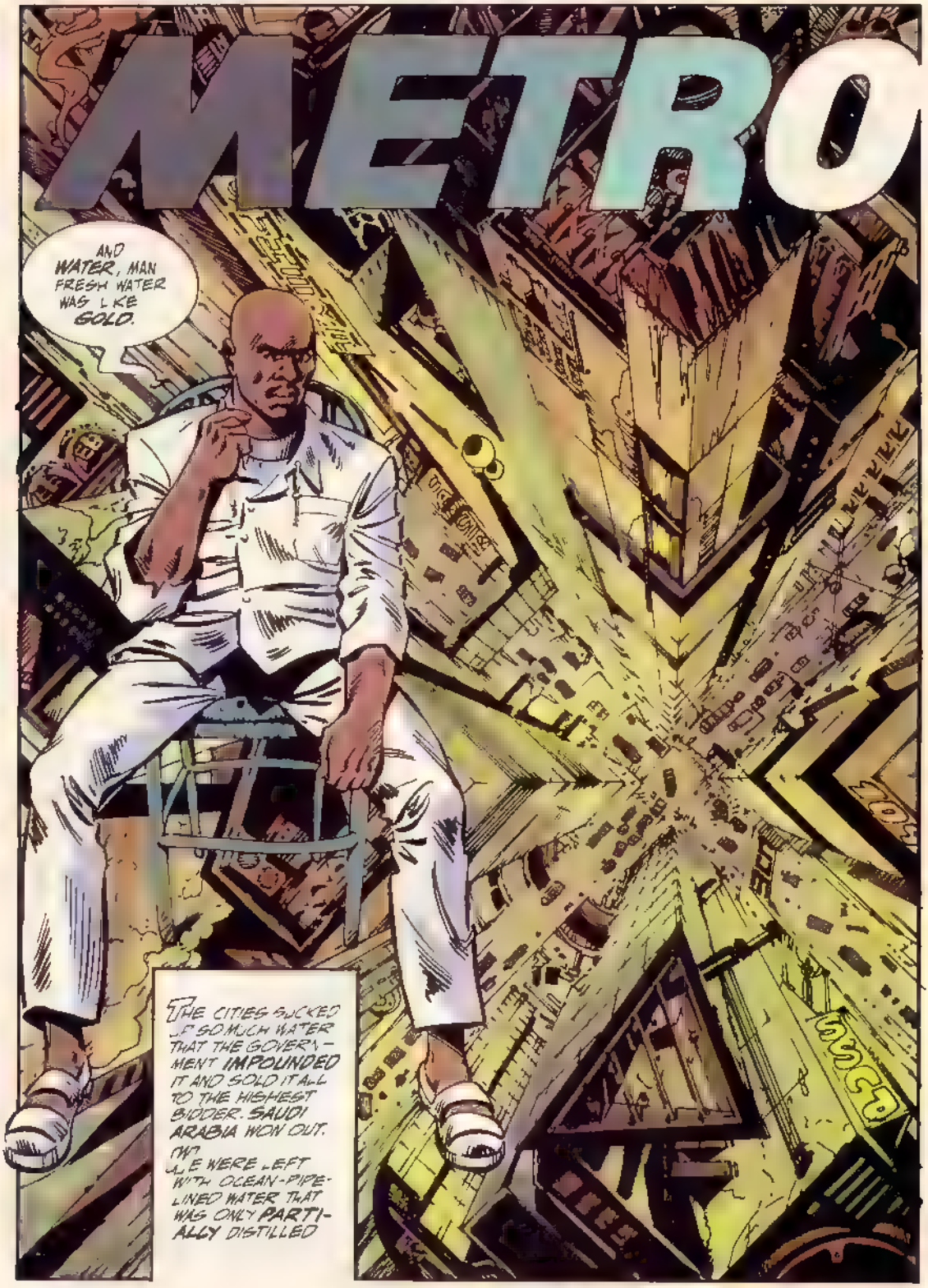
...CAPPING IT OFF WITH A DECISIVE WIN IN OUR FINAL *SURVIVAL TEST*, TO GRADUATE AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

SURVIVAL TEST 2
A RACE THROUGH THE SIMULATED TERRAIN OF HELL.
EVEN WHEN JAKOSA NEARED THE FINISH LINE AHEAD OF ME, I DID WHAT ANY GOOD SOLDIER SHOULD DO -- FOUND A WAY TO WIN, AGAINST ALL ODDS.
HOW?
I TRIPPED UP A THIRD CADET, LEFT HIM HANGING FROM A CLIFF.
JAKOSA STUPIDLY STOPPED TO HELP HIM... ACTUALLY CARRIED DEMANDROS OVER THE FINISH LINE... BUT BY THEN IT WAS OVER.
SOME SAID I WAS DISGRACED, JAKOSA ENNOBLED -- AND I'VE LOATHED HIM FOR THAT -- BUT THE FACT REMAINS.
I WON.
JAKOSA LOST.
BUT DEMANDROS LIVED
AND YOU CHEATED
WE WERE TRAINING FOR SITUATIONS OF LIFE AND DEATH, CHELANDRIA -- AND WHEN THOSE ARE THE STAKES, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS CHEATING.
EVEN SO... EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE DECLARED THE WINNER OF RECORD...
...JAKOSA WAS EMBRACED AS THE REAL WINNER?
HE WAS EMBRACED BY FOOLS -- BY LOSERS LIKE DEMANDROS.
I WAS THE WINNER -- THE ONLY WINNER.
AND WERE YOU NEVER DEFEATED BY JAKOSA ALONE?
ONLY ONCE.. WHEN A WEAK WOMAN NAMED SHARDREENA CHOSE HIM OVER ME.
THEN, IF SHE IS NOTHING BUT A PRIZE TO BE WON AND DOMINATED, HOW COULD THERE BE ENJOYMENT THIS TIME..?
...OR ANY OTHER FUTURE TIME?

SIX FROM SIRIUS 2 CONCLUDES NEXT MONTH. ON SALE THE LAST WEEK IN JANUARY.

PROLOGUE:
I AM LOSING PATIENCE, MY FRIEND. SHALL WE TRY ONCE MORE?
NAAMII K-K-KAAAA...
COME AGAIN?
TOM 18
SAID HER NAME'S =COUGH= KAY B-BALIMAN...! LIVES ON...EASTSIDE..! =SOUT= POSING AS... AS A NUN..!
DECIDED TO GIVE, EH? THAT PLEASES ME...YESSIREE, BOB!
IT'S A PITY I DON'T BELIEVE YOU!
N-NO!
NO...!
ZZZMMM
EEAAAA

BY 2025, I TELL YOU, THE CITIES JUST **EXPLODED** IN SIZE POPULATIONS INTO THE B'ZILLIONS BUILDINGS WENT UP ON TOP OF BUILDINGS ON TOP OF **MORE** BUILDINGS GOT SO YOU'D HAVE TO HIT THE 95TH TO WATCH THE **SUNSET** IF THAT IS, YOU COULD FIGHT THE MOBS OR LUCK INTO A CLEAR DAY


METRO
AND WATER, MAN FRESH WATER WAS LIKE GOLD.
THE CITIES SUCKED UP SO MUCH WATER THAT THE GOVERNMENT **IMPOUNDED** IT AND SOLD IT ALL TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER. **SAUDI ARABIA** WON OUT. NOW WE WERE LEFT WITH OCEAN-PIPELINED WATER THAT WAS ONLY **PARTIALLY** DISTILLED

by **MIKE SAENZ** & **MIKE VOSBERG** with coloring by **LES DORSCHEID**

AND ANYONE WHO COULDN'T AFFORD BETTER--YOUR BASIC MASSES--**DRANK** THE STUFF THEY DROPPED LIKE FLIES. THE CITY STREETS WERE POWDERY-WHITE WITH SILT AND SEA-SALT.

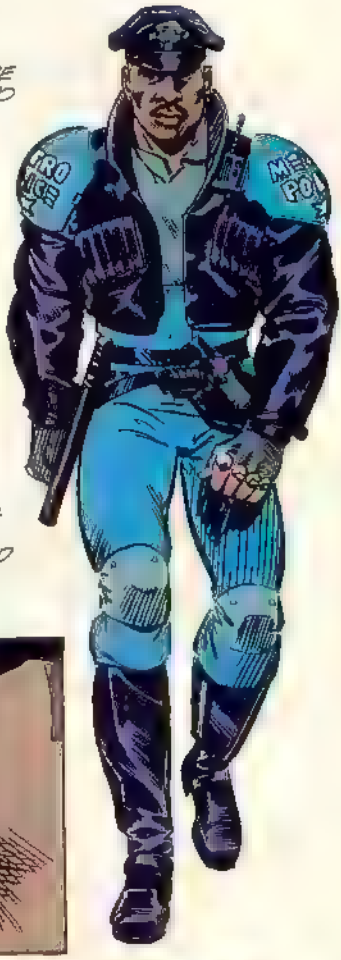
THE WINTER SNOWS **NEVER** STUCK.

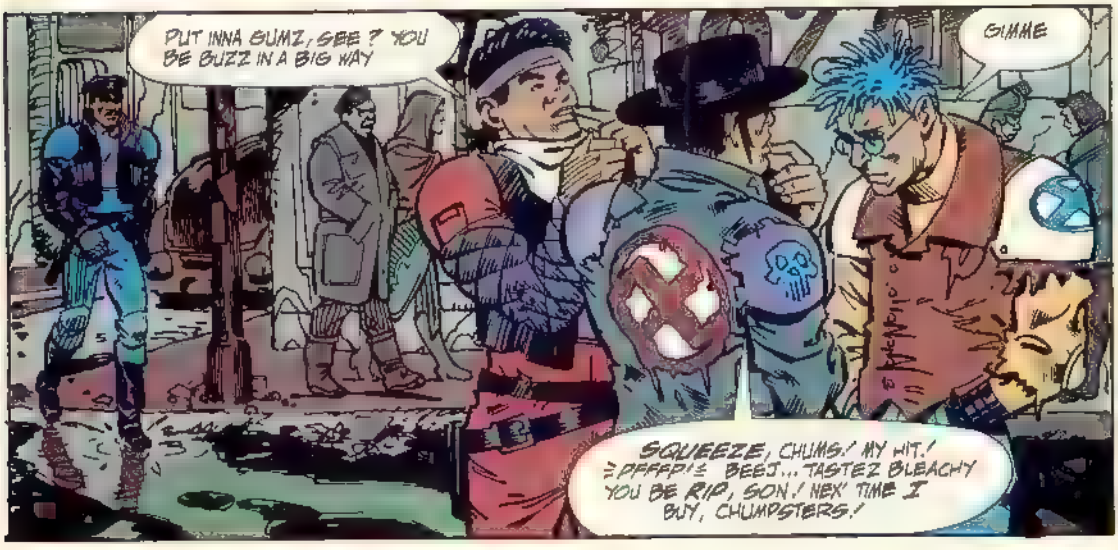
WITH THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S CUTBACKS THERE WAS NO MORE GOING ON THE PUBLIC **DOLE**. YOU HAD TO WORK OR STEAL TO FEED YOURSELF, TO STAY ALIVE. AND IF YOU WERE BAPTIZED AND BRED IN THE STREETS LIKE I WAS, YOU WEREN'T GIVEN A HELL OF A LOT OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES.

I'D HAD MY FILL OF GUTTER-RUNNING SO I OPTED FOR **ENFORCEMENT**. I HAD TO PAY FOR MY TRAINING WITH STOLEN MONEY, BUT THE IMPORTANT THING WAS I GOT IT ONE STEP UP. OUT OF THE MASSES. NOT A BIG BREAK, BUT BETTER THAN **MOST** GET IN THIS WORLD.

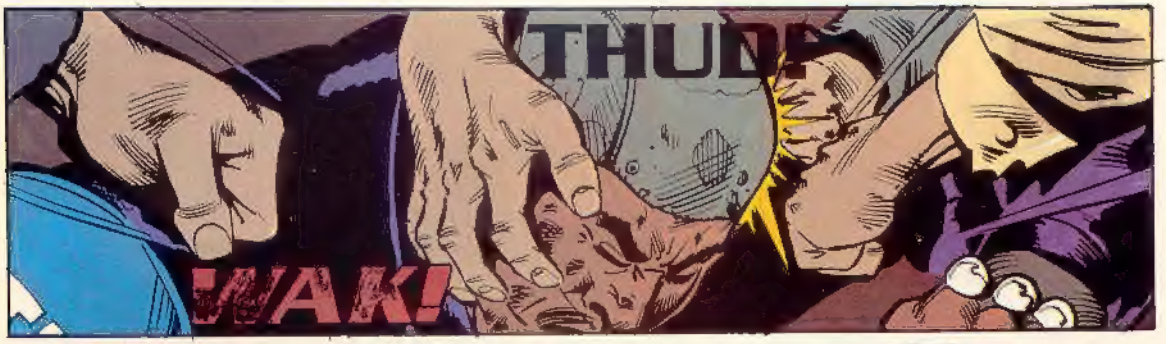
RED KING. OFFICER. METRO POLICE. ALL I HAD TO DO WAS SURVIVE.

THE OLD COPS AND ROBBERS GIG. YOU KNOW. GOOD GUYS VERSUS BAD GUYS--JUST LIKE IN THE VIDEOS--ONLY NOW IT WAS MORE LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE AGAINST THE FORCES OF **EVIL**. I'LL ADMIT IT. STEP UP THE LADDER OR NOT, I WAS DAMN SCARED TO GO TO WORK SOMETIMES. BIG CITY: **METRO**.




PUT INNA GUMI, SEE? YOU BE BUZZ IN A BIG WAY
GIMME
SQUEEZE, CHUMS! MY HIT! PFFFPT BEEJ... TASTEZ BLEACHY YOU BE RIP, SON! NEX' TIME I BUY, CHUMPSTERS!

A SHAME, RANDOLPH. NOW THAT YOU'RE DEAD, HOW CAN I REWARD YOUR SELFLESS AID AND COOPERATION? HMMMMM... A DECENT BURIAL, YOU SAY?
A SIMPLE REQUEST. BY TEM, YOU'LL HAVE IT.!
HEY. HEY, YOU!
METRO
COP! STINKY, STENCHY PEE-DEE! YOU SUCK!
I LOVE YOU TOO, GUYS. C'MON. EMPTY POCKETS. DO IT RIGHT.
HO.! DON' BE TOUCHIN' ME.! LEGGO.! I AIN'T DONE YOU--
METRO
HA.! MUDBALL!
HOWZIT FEEL T'BE SUCKERED, COP?
THAK!
BET IT FEELZ BAD, SO BAD--
METRO POLICE
HVN 17
1010
METRO
--HE COULD JUZ DIE.!


THUD
WAK!

STOP.

I SAID STOP! YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN, BOYS. GET OFF OF HIM AND GET OFF FAST OR--
--I START SHOOTING.

THERE, THERE. IT'S ALL RIGHT. DON'T TRY TO MOVE. YOU MIGHT BE--

HURT? NOT LIKE I MIGHT HAVE BEEN. THAT TOOK A LOT OF GUTS, LADY.

UH... SISTER.
YOU CAN'T GO AFTER THEM. NOT WITHOUT DOING SOMETHING FOR THOSE WOUNDS.

HOMAGE TO THEE, O MY DIVINE FATHER OSIRUS. FASHION ME STRONGLY, O LORD. GRANT THOU THAT I MAY ENTER INTO THE LAND OF EVER-LASTINGNESS.
I AM SHU OF DIVINE COMPANY. MY SOUL IS GOD. MY SOUL IS ETERNITY.
I AM HE WHO COMETH FORTH ADVANCING. "SEER OF MILLIONS OF YEARS" IS MY NAME.
I PASS ALONG THE PATHS OF THE CELESTIAL JUDGES.
INCINE
CHUT
DIRECTION
STEP 1
STEP 2
DO NOT DISPO
KLIK
AH.
AH, MY...
...BELOVED.
CONVENTS AREN'T USUALLY PART OF MY BEAT. PRETTY NICE DIGS YOU GOT HERE, SISTER.
PLEASE, OFFICER KING, CALL ME KAY.
THE CHURCH IS A GOOD AND GENEROUS PROVIDER TO THOSE OF THE FOLD WHO WORK DILIGENTLY.
HARD WORK?
4+1
JUST CONSTANT.
THIS MAY SMART A BIT.
OW! SMARTS A LOT.

METRO CONCLUDES NEXT ISSUE